

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Heart of Oregon

Application ID: 13AC145985

Program Name: Heart of Oregon AmeriCorps

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

Reviewers' Summary Comments:

- (+) The statewide needs for enhanced economic opportunities for youth are very compelling and well supported by well-referenced data including unemployment and poverty data for the three county service areas.
- (+) The application includes very detailed information on the target population of potential program participants defined as opportunity youth in the service area and as sixteen to twenty-four years olds who are neither in school or employed. The application includes compelling data including an estimate that the 1,000 opportunity youth present a potential lifetime financial burden to state and national economies of \$2.9 trillion.
- (+) Communities within the service area are well described; towns within the Central Oregon service area are specifically listed.
- (+) Education activities for AmeriCorps members related to obtaining GEDs are well described, and education activities relate well to the eco-system opportunity. Math activities include calculating the square acreage of the day's service site.
- (+) The applicant very clearly describes the key benefits to be accomplished through the project that would not be accomplished with existing staff and services as increased employment for the target population, increased GED completion, more of the target population completing college coursework, and land improvement activities that would otherwise not be completed.
- (+) The applicant clearly demonstrates that the key strategy of employing youth not in the workforce or in school to serve on environmental projects is an evidence-based strategy; as the proposed model aligns with priorities of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps.
- (+) The number of Member slots to be utilized in the program is clearly stated.
- (-) The applicant does not clearly describe the targeted impact related to land improvement expected as a result of

AmeriCorps member and volunteer service.

- (-) The application states that at least 123 opportunity youth will be employed, earn a GED/Diploma, or attend college during the project period, but data breaking out the number of Members to be employed, earn a GED, or complete a college course is only for 48 Members, which is equal to the number of Members identified as being initially enrolled in the program. The total number of youth to be engaged directly in program activities is not clearly described.
- (-) The data related to the needs related to the eco-system is not specific to the Central Oregon service area. Forestry data is national, and other environmental data is statewide.
- (-) Activities related to AmeriCorps members completing college coursework and how the coursework fits into the proposed program and how it will be promoted to Members is not well described in the application.
- (-) Specific activities related to the eco-system service that AmeriCorps members will engage in are not well described. The applicant does not describe how they relate to specific eco-system needs in Central Oregon.